

Svenskt Biografiskt Lexikon

Dictionary of Swedish National Biography

Svenskt Biografiskt Lexikon (Dictionary of Swedish National Biography) – *SBL* – is one of the oldest biographical dictionaries still in progress. The first volume was published in 1918 and as of today almost 33 volumes have been published, containing 13 912 entries, 7 319 biographies and 1 691 family biographies. Although originally published by a commercial publisher, today *SBL* is published by *Riksarkivet* (National Archives of Sweden) and financed by the government. In 1995 the dictionary was scanned and published in pdf-format on a CD-ROM with the possibility of full text search. This CD-ROM has since then been revised twice and is today covering 31 volumes out of almost 33.

The project of publishing *SBL* on the internet, funded by *Riksbankens Jubileumsfond*, started in 2008 and will be finished in late 2010. Today one person is employed specifically to work full time with the project, but other resources at *Riksarkivet* are also involved, e.g. the IT-department and *Mediakonverteringscentralen* (Media Conversion Centre), a unit at the Swedish national archives specialized in the scanning of historical records and documents.

As *SBL* is a part of *Riksarkivet* the online-dictionary will be part of a large node of archival information as well as scanned letters, registries and records from the 11th century and onwards, that will be available from www.riksarkivet.se. In the future we would also like to connect *SBL* to the Europäisches Biographie-Portal, www.biographie-portal.eu.

The internet application will be using a database containing biographical data about the entries. This will enable structured searches to be made by surname, first name, place and date of birth as well as death, and occupations. Full text search of the entire dictionary will also be a possibility. The technical platform will be a SQL-server database that will be available to the reader through a HTML-interface managed by *Riksarkivet*.

The printed dictionary will be scanned in its entirety by *Mediakonverteringscentralen*. The scanned pages – ca 25 000 – will then be converted to text-files using Optical Character Recognition. Finally the text files will be marked up structurally using XML. This means that all meta-data, like revisions and technical information about the scanning process, is stored in the file. The XML-schema used is based on the DTD TEI-lite.

The structural mark up enables more structured search possibilities when using the full text search option. As well as searching the entire body of the dictionary, you will also be able to search in specific parts of the different biographies, e.g. only in the biographical text, in the short CV that initiates all biographical articles, or in the bibliography. The use of XML as mark up-language also enables later additions of features, e.g. cross-references and bibliographical links.

The online reader will meet the texts as a HTML-application and the XML-files will be transformed into HTML pages on the fly when asked for by the user. In the future all new additions to the dictionary will be published both in print and online. It is important to stress though, that the internet publication of the dictionary will only be a service towards the

readers and not the main product. The "original" publication will still be the printed version of the dictionary.

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Publication related to the conference:

To put an old Dictionary on the Internet. The Dictionary of Swedish National Biography in cyberspace, *Biografische Lexika im Internet. Internationale Tagung der "Sächsischen Biografie" in Dresden (30. und 31. Mai 2008)*, Dresden 2009